

Green Card Lottery Email Scam Alert

Recently, U.S. Embassy Nairobi has seen a sharp increase in email-based “Green Card” scams. These emails claim that recipients have won a U.S. Green Card and instruct them to fill out forms and send money for a “processing fee,” usually directing payment to a Western Union account. Some of these emails look very realistic, and sadly, many Kenyans have been fooled into paying hundreds or thousands of dollars to these fraudsters.

These emails refer to a Green Card Lottery, known officially as the Diversity Visa lottery, which the U.S. holds each year. **We want to alert Kenyans that the US government never notifies winners of the Diversity Visa lottery by email.**

Also, any email that does come from the US government will come from an email address that *ends* in “.gov”, such as nairobifraud@state.gov. These phony e-mails have originated from email addresses such as: dv.states.gov@usa.com, us.states.gov@usa.com, or usagreencard2010@aol.com. The fraudsters work hard to make their email addresses and documents look convincing.

The American Embassy urges Kenyans to simply delete such messages. Again, successful Diversity Visa Lottery applicants will never be notified by e-mail. The following are additional tips to help you avoid being tricked:

- Those who won the 2011 Diversity Visa lottery have already received a paper letter informing them that they are eligible for an interview for a Diversity Visa. They can also check if they have won at www.dvlottery.state.gov until June 30, 2011.
- Those who entered the 2012 Diversity Visa lottery program will not receive any direct notification; they will be given a user name and password in order to check for themselves at www.dvlottery.state.gov on or after May 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.
- There is no charge to enter the Diversity Visa lottery. Any fees would be paid at the embassy on the day of the interview.
- E-mails originating from a U.S. federal agency will end with the domain name “gov”. In other words, the last three letters of the e-mail address should be “gov”, or it is a fraudulent message.
- If you did not already apply for the Diversity Visa lottery on-line, you cannot win.
- To learn more, please see the Federal Trade Commission Warning at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt001.shtm>.

The only way to apply for the DV lottery is directly through the official [U.S. Department of State Website](http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1322.html) (http://travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/types/types_1322.html) during the specified and limited-time registration period.
